The IDLER

Public Occurrences, Comment, Excursions & Rational Entertainment

Nr 8 APRIL 1965 50c THE COPY

THE OTHER SIDE OF MEMPHIS

And the Lord came to the Good Man and said, "Son, I want you to go to Mississippi and help the poor people down there." And the Good Man replied, "Lord, I'll go if you'll be there with me." And the Lord said, "Son, I'll go with you, but only as far as Memphis."

Mississippi, despite civil rights laws, statements of principle and hints of progress, still inspires Negroes to tell such stories, stories born in the deepest frustration, despair and anger.

Last February, the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights went the other side of Memphis, to Jackson, Miss., to view for itself this state, that, 100 years after the end of Civil War, remains morally and philosophically seceded from the Union.

We attended the week of hearings and took a look around. This is our story:

Alfred Whitley is a Mississippi Negro who works at a Natchez rubber plant. Coming home from work one evening, he was stopped by a road block. Hooded men with robes appeared, hauled Whitley out of the car, took him into some nearby woods, stripped and beat him.

The hooded men accused Whitley of being "the leading nigger in the NAACP" and demanded to know the name of the white man in charge.

The beating continued, punctuated by the crack of a bullwhip. Whitley was forced to drink a bottle of castor oil. One of the men said, "He's the toughest one I ever beat."

Then Whitley was told, "Get up and run."

He took off in the Mississippi dark, ran about fifty feet, and fell on his stomach. Searchlights glared above him. Then the sound of guns. Bullets whizzed overhead. Finally it stopped. The men were gone.

Whitley got dressed and went home.

Archie Curtis is a Negro who runs the Curtis Funeral Home in Natchez. One year ago, late on a February evening, Curtis received a phone call asking that he bring his ambulance to a remote rural spot to pick up a sick person. The funeral director called his ambulance driver, Willie Jackson, and the two of them drove off on the call.

They had been told to come to a crossroad where someone would be waiting to lead them to the proper house. Reaching the rendezvous, the two Negroes found no one. They proceeded a bit further, then stopped to ask directions from those in a car behind them.

It was an ambush. Four men with white hoods stepped from the car.

Curtis and Jackson were blindfolded, taken a distance, made to strip, then struck with whips.

Curtis pleaded, "Man, don't be whipping me like this." But the men continued.

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The Idler

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One suggested, "We ought to kill them." But they didn't; instead left the pair with the warning, "You better not tell anybody about this."

Curtis turned to his driver and, with the resignation of a man to whom such an experience came as no surprise, said simply, "Well, Willie, we got to get dressed and go home."

T. V. Johnson, a Belzoni Negro, has not been beaten or whipped. He even registered to vote back in 1954. But he hasn't voted.

During his testimony before the Civil Rights Commission, the following exchange took place:

Q. Are you going to try (to vote)?
A. No, not until the intimidation is gone.
Q. When will you vote?
A. When they all go down.
Q. Who are you afraid of?
A. Everybody.

And why not? Tomorrow it may be T. V. Johnson's night in the woods. Fear of "everybody" is not an ambiguity to Mississippi Negroes. It is hard to be more specific in a state where hooded men appear in the night with bullwhips, bombs are thrown from passing cars, and phone calls bring anonymous threats.

It is said that the Mississippi Negro is fighting for equality. That is not true. He hasn't even gotten that far. His struggle of the moment is to gain a foothold so he may begin the fight for equality.

Mississippi is a state where a pronouncement by the Governor or the Chamber of Commerce calling for law and order is a novelty. It is a state where members of a federal panel appointed to look into the rights of citizens solemnly applauds a city not because of any great strides in promoting the equality of men, but because no heads have been bashed in there recently. It is a state where many appear to believe that the limits of progress are reached when terror is eliminated.

In such an atmosphere sophisticated arguments over civil rights lose their meaning. Until some of the most primitive concepts of democracy are accepted — such as the right of a citizen to vote and the obligation of government to protect its citizens — it matters little who uses which washroom.

The Negro in Mississippi is not only segregated; he has been isolated from almost every mechanism that might possibly change his condition.

The Ballot

You do not have to experience the brutal nights of Archie Curtis or Alfred Whitley to learn the high cost of being a Negro in Mississippi.

The story of these incidents spreads through their county and beyond, bringing with them the tacit moral: don't try to change things.

Over the past few years Negroes have been trying to change things and the most fundamental change they have sought is the right to vote.

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Of over 400-thousand voting-age Negroes in Mississippi less than 7% are registered.

Opposition to increased registration has ranged from acts of violence to subtle obstacles and not-so subtle threats.

Henry Rayburn, a 63-year-old farmer from near Charleston, was approached by a man with a club when he went to vote. Rayburn says the man told him "he would kill me if I tried to vote."

The Commission wanted to know if the police had been notified of the threat. No, Rayburn replied, because "the law coincides with what the other side does insofar as Negroes are involved."

Alena Hamlett of Scobey registered in 1962. When her name was published in the local newspaper, as required by Mississippi law, a female effigy was hung near her home.

Dorothy Mae Foster went to register with her husband at Fayette in 1963. She was later visited by three men who presented a card that read:

"Thousands of Klansmen are waiting, watching. Don't be misled. Let your conscience be your guide. Ku Klux Klan."

She was told, "If you don't take your name off the list you will be sorry."

Mrs. Mary Welch of Humphreys County said she was told by a county official that "I was going to get in trouble and wasn't going to get any more commodities." Rural Negroes in Mississippi depend upon surplus agricultural commodities for survival.

When the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee attempted to organize a voter registration drive in Macomb, 16 bombings occurred.

Mrs. Mary Thomas, a high school graduate, had her photograph taken by county police when she went to register. She was asked why she wanted to register. "We've always given you commodities," a county official told her.

Shortly after her return home, a deputy sheriff arrived and arrested her for selling beer without a county license. She was fined $365.71 for failure to have a $15 license. She had never been told whether she passed the registration test.

Jesse James Brewer, a farmer from Tallahatchie County, went to register last summer. He was told by the sheriff that he had gone to the wrong place. On the way to the proper courthouse, the sheriff passed him. Upon his arrival, Brewer and other Negro registrants were surrounded by a group of men.

NEW PRICE

Effective with this issue, the annual subscription price of THE IDLER *is cut to $3.00 (4.00 abroad). The break is not entirely the reader's. We will only put out eleven issues a year so the editor can take a vacation, participate in two weeks' active duty with the Coast Guard Reserve, and refresh himself briefly at the delicious fountain of inactivity.*

Current subscribers will have their subscriptions extended on this basis: they will get one additional month for every month they have remaining in their subscription.

The news stand price will stay the same.

One of them said, "You niggers get away from the courthouse. You don't have no business here."

For the next three weeks trucks with gunracks on the back repeatedly drove up and circled Brewer's house. He finally registered on the fourth try.

Brewer is a World War II veteran. He told the Commission, "The only time I felt like a man was when I was in the Army. After I got out it seemed my freedom run out."

And he added, "I want to vote because there are some things I want to get straight."

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The extent to which fear pervades the Negro community was indicated by a survey of Negro teachers presented to the Commission by James W. Protho.

Teachers in four counties were interviewed. In one county, 62% of the teachers refused to be interviewed because the school superintendent had warned them not to discuss civil rights with anyone.

Marshall: Tough test

Registration of teachers ran from a low of 0% to a high of 74%. In every county at least 40% of the teachers *volunteered* expressions of fear concerning voting. In one county 79% expressed fear.

They did not like talking about it. As one teacher put it, "The walls have ears."

Mississippi, pollster Protho concluded, is a "totalitarian local system."

Beatings, bombings, burnings, threats of violence, warnings that commodities will be cut off, loss of jobs, removal of credit, as well as photographing, trumped up charges, and other harrassment by police, are routine methods of voter intimidation.

But even if these were to disappear tomorrow, the state of Mississippi would still have impressive legal hurdles for the Negro to surmount in order to register.

Burke Marshall, the former Assistant Attorney General in charge of civil rights matters, submitted a statement to the Commission that outlined the problem:

In Mississippi registration is a prerequisite to voting in any election, state or federal. The registration laws are administered in each county by a registrar, who is the circuit court clerk, an elected official. Since the recent adoption of the Federal Poll Tax Amendment the payment of poll taxes is a prerequisite to voting only in elections for state offices. Payment of the tax is not a prerequisite to registration. The county sheriff, as tax collector, is responsible for collection of the poll tax.

The basic qualifications for registration in Mississippi are citizenship, residence in the state for two years and in the election district in the county for one year. The prospective voter must also be at least 21 years of age, not insane and he must not have been convicted of any disqualifying crime.

In addition to these basic qualifications, the Mississippi Constitution and laws impose the requirements that an applicant must be able to read and write any section of the state constitution and give a "reasonable interpretation" thereof to the satisfaction of the registrar; he must demonstrate a "reasonable understanding" of the duties and obligations of citizenship under a constitutional form of government

These requirements became effective in March 1955. All persons registered prior to January 1, 1954 were exempted by law from having their qualifications to vote determined under these added requirements.

In 1960, the requirement of "good moral character" as a prerequisite to voting was added to the Mississippi Constitution.

In 1962 several new statutes, including one implementing the good moral character requirement, were

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adopted. These laws (1) require that all blanks on the application form be completed "properly and responsively" by the applicant without assistance; (2) prevent a registrar from advising a rejected applicant of the reason for his rejection, because that would constitute assistance; (3) provide for publication of names of applicants for registration in the local newspaper and require applicants to wait for an extended period of time after publication before the applicant can determine (usually about a month) whether he has been registered or denied registration; (4) permit any qualified elector to challenge the qualifications including moral character of any applicant whose name is pubpublished. Finally, a 1960 law permits registrars to destroy application forms.

The odds are clearly stacked against a Negro trying to register. The Justice Department is in the process of challenging several of the state requirements, but the procedure is a tedious and difficult one. In only one county has there been any significant increase in registration because of a federal suit.

The staff of the Commission made a study of how Mississippi law is actually applied by county registrars. A thorough review of the records of Issaquena County showed that until last summer all white applicants passed voter qualification tests while all Negroes failed.

There was strong evidence that white applicants were given aid in their interpretation of sections of the state constitution. Commission Attorney Charles Hempstone said he discovered that 15 of 48 whites given an identical section to interpret had also given identical answers.

In the section concerning election to the state senate these applicants came up with the phrase: "to elect the senate members every four years in order to get people who keep abreast of the times." One applicant left out one word and thus produced this interpretation:

"to elect the senate members every four years in order to get people who keep of the times." He passed.

Another white applicant wrote simply:

"equible wrights."

He also passed.

Since last summer, according to the staff report, the situation has improved, but evidence of discrimination in administration of the tests still exists.

The real hypocrisy of the reasonable interpretation" requirement was revealed in an exchange between Commission member Dean Erwin Griswold of the Harvard Law School and Humphreys County Clerk G. H. Hood. Griswold, a heavy-set lawyer who speaks in tones reminiscent of W. C. Fields, slowly lifted himself out of his chair, walked over to witness Hood, handed him a copy of section 182 of the state constitution (see box next page) and asked him for a reasonable interpretation.

Hood, who had given this section to applicants and had judged their ability to vote on the basis of their answers, stared at the sheet for several minutes, then started to give a reply that included much of the wording of the section.

Griswold bit off the reply: "I didn't ask you to read, I asked you to interpret."

Hood huddled with his lawyer and then said that he would refuse to proceed because of the pressure being put on him by the committee.

"You mean on the grounds that it may incriminate you," Griswold asked.

Hood said, "Yes, sir."

The point was made.

Civil rights leader Aaron Henry told the Commission that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 had not helped to get one Negro registered in Mississippi. This is an exaggeration, but even the optimism of Burke Marshall in describing the progress the Justice Department has made (time required for litigation has been reduced, court decrees have been issued to speed up

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Before you vote . . .

In order to qualify as a voter in Mississippi, registrants must, among quite a few other things, give a "reasonable interpretation" of a section of the state constitution. Here's a sample section. When asked by CRC member Dean Griswold to give a "reasonable" interpretation, Humphreys County Registrar G. H. Hood declined to do so on the grounds that it might tend to incriminate him. He had used Section 182 in tests for Negro applicants:

Sec. 182. Tax exemptions. The power to tax corporations and their property shall never be surrendered or abridged by any contract or grant to which the state or any political subdivision thereof may be a party, except that the legislature may grant exemption from taxation in the encouragement of manufacturers and other new enterprises of public utility extending for a period of not exceeding five years, the time of such exemptions to commence from date of charter, if to a corporation; and if to an individual enterprise, then from the commencement of work; but when the legislature grants such exemptions for a period of five years or less, it shall be done by general laws, which shall distinctly enumerate the cases of manufactures and other new enterprises of public utility entitled to such exemptions, and shall prescribe the mode and manner in which the right to such exemptions shall be determined.

registration), can not conceal the need for additional federal legislation if the Mississippi Negro is going to be able to exercise his right to vote.

The President's new voting proposals would be invaluable in this regard.

Mississippi Governor Paul Johnson has warned that "federal registrars could almost bring civil war," but even he admits "most of our people realize that there has been some discrimination."

He noted, in an interview in the *Washington Post*, that "you don't have a leg to stand on when a registrar registers a white man who can hardly read or write and turns down a Negro woman with a M.A."

But the governor said he would take no steps to remove such a registrar since "it's purely a local situation."

And so it will remain for some time, it would appear, unless the federal government's hand can be strengthened.

The Law

George Washington, Sr., appears superficially to fit the image of an Uncle Tom.

Much about the middle-aged Canton, Miss., storeowner suggests it. His name, his manner of speech, his buoyant spirit that shields him from the brutality of his environment, and his expressions of faith in the goodness of white men, illfit him to join the company of the new Negro generation.

Speaking of the police chief of his town, Washington says, "Now, Mr. Dan — he's real nice. He's always polite to me."

But George Washington, Sr., is not an Uncle Tom. He has joined the fight.

Last summer he rented a building to COFO workers involved in voter registration. Last summer this house was bombed.

When Canton Police Chief Dan C. Thompson's officers arrived to investigate the bombing, Washington was arrested. He had failed to report the bombing promptly and the police wanted to know why.

Taken to jail, Washington, according to his testimony, was told by one of the officers, "We're going to send your so-and-so to the penitentary. We

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can get you ten years." Then, Washington said, the officer "hauled off and hit me."

"What were you doing," a Commission member asked.

The ever-cheerful Negro replied, "I wasn't doing anything. I was just going into jail."

He was struck again and questioned for three or four hours before being released.

Reflecting on the investigation of the bombing, Washington commented, "It looked like to me that they weren't too particular to see who did it."

It was a cogent observation. Two-thirds of the one-page police report was concerned with the failure to report the incident promptly. The rest was about the investigation into the bombing.

Later, Washington went to see "Mr. Dan" to complain about the police action. The police chief promised that such incidents would not occur again. And they haven't.

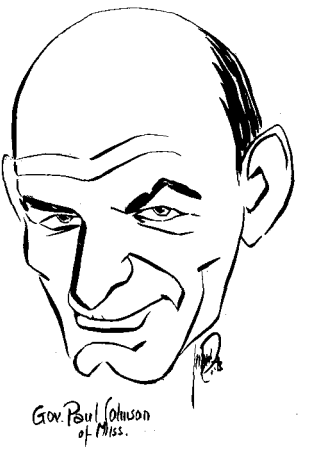
Chief Dan Thompson has had 21 years of police experience. Whatever his views on segregation, he appears to take his repsonsibilities as a police officer seriously. He told the Commission that he lectured his officers severely after the Washington incident.

Not all Mississippi police officials have as much professional background or seem interested in gaining it.

County sheriffs are elected by the predominately white electorate. They are not allowed to succeed themselves. Their duties are complicated from the start due to the fact that they also serve as tax collectors and are paid on the basis of commissions received from taxes, fines and licenses.

(This doubling in brass is not limited to sheriffs. A sign on a Mississippi road called for the election of a man who was running for the combined post of coroner and ranger.)

Canton is located in Madison County *(see Violence in Madison County further on in this issue)*. Its sheriff is Jack Cauthen, a member of the White Citizen's Council. Until his election he was a vocational agriculture instructor. Armed with this experience, he administers the law in Madison County.



A local situation?

Mirza Hamid Kizilbash, a Pakistani citizen who teaches at Tougaloo College north of Jackson, took a drive into Sheriff Cauthen's county last May. He carried several whites to a civil rights meeting in Canton. The car was followed to the meeting. When the session broke up, Kizilbash and his friends started back for Jackson, less than a half-hour drive to the southwest. They were followed again and blocked at a turn. A group of white men surrounded the car and started beating Kizilbash. He recalls one of the men saying, "Let's kill him," and another suggesting, "Let's have a party."

Kizilbash believes his group escaped only because the men were eventually convinced that he was not an American citizen.

Back at Tougaloo, the Pakistani teacher says he wrote a letter to Sheriff Cauthen describing the incident and suggesting that he get in touch for further information. He never heard from the sheriff. Some days later, the president of Tougaloo called Cauthen and gave him the tag number of the car that was involved.

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"Give us a federal registrars bill in 1965 and the Civil Rights Commission won't have to worry about Mississippi. We'll handle it ourselves." —*Charles Evers, Miss. NAACP leader*

The sheriff told the Commission he never got the letter from Kizilbash but admitted the call from Tougaloo's president.

He said he questioned the owner of the car who told him that the car was used "without his knowledge." Somehow, the mysteriously borrowed vehicle returned the next day.

So far as the Commission could determine that was the end of the investigation.

Sheriff Cauthen took more interest in another case.

The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, an agency of the Department of Agriculture, held elections last December to pick members for the local committees that help determine agricultural policy in the county.

1964 was the first year Negroes in Mississippi had made a concentrated effort to get on the ASCS ballot. In Madison County the Negroes had failed to win a place on the ticket, but were conducting a write-in campaign.

The Agriculture Department had ruled that representatives of civil rights groups and other interested organizations could have poll-watchers present at the election.

Miss Elayne DeLott was one of the poll-watchers at the R&N Grocery in the Gluckstadt area of the county.

Space in the store was crowded, but ASCS manager Robert Hodges arranged things so that Miss DeLott could observe the balloting and assist any Negro farmer who requested her help, as permitted by ASCS regulations. Then, according to a Commission staff report:

Sometime after 9:30 a.m. Sheriff Cauthen arrived and asked Miss DeLott to leave the store. She was told that she could see all she needed to see from the outside. She complied with his order. After the Sheriff left, an ASCS committeeman asked her to come back inside the store. An hour or so later Sheriff Cauthen returned. He discussed the situation with the ASCS committeemen and, over their objection, ordered Miss DeLott to leave the store. He told her that he was in charge of keeping the peace, and that if she remained in the store four or five white men might decide to rough her up. He advised that she would be safer outside. Later she went back and was arrested when Sheriff Cauthen returned to the store.

After Miss DeLott had been arrested, Eartis Crawford, a Negro civil rights worker, attempted to enter the R&N Grocery. A group of white men stopped him at the entrance to the store. One of them got a gun from behind the counter, but was restrained by other men in the store. Someone struck Crawford on the back of the head and he was shoved out of the store.

Miss DeLott, according to the sheriff, was arrested for "investigation."

"I arrested her because it looked like she could have caused trouble," he told the Commission. Nobody from the Agriculture Department, the local county committee, or the management of the store had requested Cauthen to make the arrest, but he proceeded anyway.

"To me she was a threat to the peace and dignity of Madison County," he explained.

A Commission member asked why, if the store was so crowded and if, as Cauthen maintained, Miss DeLott was blocking a voting booth, he had not asked someone else to move. His reply:

"It didn't occur to me."

Did he expect Miss DeLott to shout or shove or hit or in other ways disturb the peace? No.

Would not any potential threat to the peace actually come from others in the store?

"For me, it was Miss DeLott."

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And he added this evidence to support his action:

"She had a very decidedly strong odor."

Asked Griswold:

"Does that constitute a breach of the peace?"

At the end of lengthy and hopeless colloquy, the law school dean stated:

"You have given me not one scintilla of information that she ever committed a crime constituting breach of the peace."

Miss DeLott was released on $250 bond.

The handling of the Kizilbash and DeLott cases brough forth the inevitable question from the Commission:

Q. Did you regard Miss DeLott a greater threat to the peace than the people who assaulted Kizilbash?

And the answer:

I don't get what you mean.

Over at Laurel, Miss., local justice also proceeds in a curious fashion.

When an attempt was made to integrate the coffee shop of the Pinehurst Hotel in accordance with the public accommodations section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Police Chief Nix acted on the complaint of the management and arrested several persons for breach of the peace.

Nix maintained that he was obliged to serve any warrant sworn out. "Any charges," he said, "that are made, I am obliged to serve them, not to prove them. I can't set myself up as the judge."

Nix was asked if he was familiar with the public accommodations law. He said he was.

And there were these exchanges:

Commission Counsel William Taylor: Were you aware they had a right to be served under the public accommodations sections . . . and knowing of this right, did you warn the owner?"

Nix: That's not up to me to determine, that's up to the courts.

Griswold: Do you have any obligation to enforce federal laws in Laurel? Don't you take an oath to obey the Constitution of the United States? . . .

Nix: . . . I don't believe I can enforce the segregation or desegregation.

Griswold: . . . This is not a valid charge which you used under the federal act of the United States and upheld by the Supreme Court . . .

And Griswold concluded, "I find it it mightly puzzling if there is an equal administration of justice in Laurel, Mississippi."

Even in Natchez, where defiance of the law has gone so far that the police chief has been threatened and the mayor has had his house bombed, *(See Violence in Adams County further on in this issue)*, Police Chief James T. Robinson could attend a Ku Klux Klan meeting and be "very impressed." Eight or nine hundred persons were present and, said Robinson, "I did not see anything that night that would make me think they were anything but outstanding people."

Members of the Civil Rights Commission are: John A. Hannah, President of Michigan State University, Chairman; Eugene C. Patterson, Editor, The Atlanta Constitution, Vice-Chairman; Mrs. Frankie Muse Freeman, Associate General Counsel, St. Louis Housing and Land Clearance Authorities; Erwin N. Griswold, Dean, Harvard University School of Law; Reverend Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C., President, Notre Dame University; and Robert S. Rankin, Department of Political Science, Duke University.

Robinson has, however, made an investigation to rout out members of KKK from his force. He says he found none. He doesn't feel membership in Americans for Preservation of the

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White Race would be a bar to membership in the force. He's not so sure about membership in the NAACP.

In another case, Bruce Payne, a white civil rights worker and Yale student (who had once been warned by a Natchez police officer that if he brought any more civil rights workers in or caused trouble there would be some "slow walking and some sad singing"), was stopped and beaten by a group of men outside of Port Gibson. A group from Natchez was arrested in the case a year later, but since Payne was not present, the case was eventually dropped.

Claiborne County District Attorney T. J. Lawrence, a white-haired practitioner of rural courtroom oratory, was asked to explain why.

It was revealed that Lawrence never interviewed the victim, made no effort to locate him (that, he said, was the sheriff's job) or to subpoena him (that, he said, was the grand jury foreman's job). The D.A. then gave an ingenuous description of how he held up the grand jury from noon to 4 in the afternoon awaiting the arrival of Payne, whom no one in Claiborne County had bothered to notify.

Then, with Payne in the Commission hearing room, Lawrence flourished his cane and announced that he had, minutes before his testimony, personally invited the Yale student to appear at the next grand jury session on "the third Monday in May, 19-and-65."

Dean Griswold observed, "If we had not come to Mississippi you would not have done anything."

> *"I have never seen the fear in people, even during the invasion of France, that I saw when I went to Madison County."*
>
> *—The Rev. James F. McCray*

Such incidents give the flavor of local enforcement. A study of the Commission reports gives the substance.

In case after case of civil rights violence, the last notation is "No arrests made."

There is no doubt that the police have a difficult job in Mississippi. As George Washington, Sr., told us, "Every white man is the law here." But the evidence strongly indicates that where law officers have behaved in a professional manner, violence has been greatly reduced.

In many instances the police and the courts have been more interested in suppressing civil rights activity *(See Greenwood Justice further on in this issue)* than they have in putting an end to bombings and beatings.

There are numerous current practices that do not help to maintain law and order. Among them:

—Failure to investigate thoroughly incidents of violence.

—Arrests of Negroes after they report incidents to the police.

—Failure to present cases properly to grand juries and courts.

—Active police participation in the intimidation of Negroes.

—Indifference to the activities of groups such as the KKK and the John Birch Society.

There are good policemen in Mississippi. And when you find them, you find men who have been professionally trained and who regard their first obligation to the law. There are not enough of them.

COFO

Mississippians have been moderately successful in spreading the idea that civil rights workers from the North have unduly stirred up trouble in their state. They talk of "outside agitators messing in local problems." We have heard civil rights supporters in the North express doubts about the wisdom of a program such as last summer's COFO project in Mississippi.

The testimony before the Commission, however, made clear the indispensable role played by COFO in overcoming the Mississippi Negro's

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fear to act. Repeatedly, during the hearing and in private conversations, we heard Negroes say that the presence of whites from the North who were willing to walk with them to courthouse made the difference.

William Eskridge, a 64-year-old farmer, told us, "I can't honestly say all our trouble is the white man's fault. There's fear among the Negroes. Unreasonable fear. When minds are enslaved, they are hard to change."

The arrival of the COFO workers was the catalyst that dissolve the fear and permitted Negroes to take the first halting, difficult steps into the light of hope.

The Federal Government

One of the sad ironies of Mississippi is that, even today, the federal government plays an ambivilent role in Mississippi.

The Civil Rights Commission held its hearings in the Veterans Administration Center. In that federally operated building there was a segregated barbershop.

Local federal agencies, such as the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service and Social Security, which greatly effect the Negro, are closely connected with the white leadership of the state.

There are 2700 ASCS committeemen in Mississippi; only 18 of them are Negroes.

The most effective federal men in Mississippi are the Justice Department lawyers, who perform the unglamorous and difficult task of preparing and presenting voter registration suits. In one case, for example, 14,000 application forms had to be analyzed in order to determine if the grading of the applications involved discrimination. The time required to settle a case has been considerably shortened but the task is still enormous. Less than one per cent of Mississippi's voting age Negroes have been enfranchised thanks to federal efforts.

While the Justice Department has been making a little progress in voter registration, it is harder to see what contribution it has made in the protection of citizen's rights.

The FBI, despite its many investigators in the state, has an exceedingly poor record. In fact, a number of law officers appearing before the Commission used the FBI as a rationalization for their own failure to make arrests, e.g. if the FBI can't solve these crimes how do you expect us to?

It has been argued, by us among others (see December issue), that the federal government has the power and the duty to become more actively engaged in the protection of life and property in the state. Nothing in the testimony given to the Commission indicated that this need had signicantly lessened in recent months. This is not to say that a federal "invasion" of Mississippi is desirable. But there is no reason why federal officers can not provide discreet protection for Negro churches, meeting places, and threatened individuals.

We have been paying for the protection of Joseph Valachi for some time now and it is our impression that there are some people down in Mississippi who are just as worth saving.

The Change

In Mississippi these days there is talk about a climate of change. Such a climate does exist.

Moderates are saying in public things they would not have dared whisper in private a few years back.

Important groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Mississipi Economic Council, are issuing statements calling for equal administration of justice and law that once would have been considered seditious.

In a few cities, Greenville is noteworthy among them, the responsible forces of the community — local government, the newspaper, the businessmen — have overcome the racial fanactics and are slowly adapting to new conditions.

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Mississippi is struggling in other than racial matters.

The road the state must follow leads not just away from racial tension but towards an adequate level of economic development, education and social well-being.

To appreciate the difficulties one need only look at the new program announced by Mississippi business leaders. It's called "75 x 75." Its goal: to raise the average income of Mississippians to 75% of the national average by 1975.

To the outsider such an objective may seem extremely modest. But in Mississippi it is simply realistic.

As Mississippians face the fact that they have segregated not only Negroes from whites, but their whole state from America, change will come.

The state's top businessmen know it.

Mississippi needs new industry. A discriminatory educational system and the existence of a large impoverished minority lacking labor skills can only work against the economic goals the state has set for itself.

Still the voices of the "good people" of the state are pitifully silent. They may be, as one businessman put it, "tired of being led by the dead hand of the past." But if fatigued, they are also afraid.

The old ways will not surrender easily. The Greyhound bus station in Meridian has been technically desegregated. But Negroes still sit at one lunch counter and whites at the other. In Jackson, ten years after the school desegregation decision, less than fifty Negroes attend mixed schools.

Even the Civil Rights Commission, for all its talk about improving biracial communications, held a panel panel on law with an all-white panel of Mississippi attorneys one day, then heard testimony separately from two Negro lawyers the next.

And, as if to underline the continuity of disorder in the state, COFO's Laurel headquarters burned during the week the Commission sat in hearings.

Mississippi *is* changing. The stranger sees the small signs and smiles, his confidence renewed in the process of democracy.

He leaves the state shoving the memories of callousness and cruelty aside to make room for more pleasant thoughts of progress, statements of principle, and communications between the races.

But as he stares out the window of his compartment on board the *Southerner* rumbling towards Birmingham, Atlanta and the North, the memories keep forcing their way back. Tarpaper drooping from wretched walls, torn, rusted iron roofs that will not last another season, and weathered faces deteriorate silently as the train passes.

An aging Negro stops in a field to wave at the train, then turns without seeing if anyone has waved back.

Mississippi *is* changing.

Will he know it?

ALREADY MADE?

Has talk of the draft's end really slowed recruitment? According to "Capitol Stuff" a reliable *NY Daily News* column, all the services are suffering from "larger enlisted losses than expected." "If we should discontinue the draft," the column continued, "the whole manpower structure of the armed forces would collapse." This conclusive information all comes from a Pentagon report that should be made readily available to all those working on or interested in the draft study. During the past year many reports, hypotheses, and conjectures have been sought, and paid for, by the Department of Defense. Is it possible that these expensive and elaborate research projects merely mask an arbitrary decision already made by our Invisible Government — Pentagon Division?

—*Mary McSea*

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VIOLENCE IN ADAMS COUNTY

There has been little civil rights activity in Adams County. When a group of Freedom Riders came to Natchez in 1961, they were not permitted to leave the bus. In October and November 1963 a small group of civil rights workers came to Adams County to assist in the Aaron Henry Freedom Voter Campaign, an effort to stimulate Negro interest in registration and voting. About this time a series of incidents of violence began in and around the County.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Violence in Madison County, Violence in Adams County, and Greenwood Justice are taken from staff reports of the Civil Rights Commission.

1. On the night of September 21, 1963, the *Mount Plains Baptist Church* burned to the ground. The sheriff was notified. The State Fire Marshal's office investigated and found evidence of arson. No arrests have been made.

2. *James Carter Winston* is a 40-year-old Negro who was employed by the Pickett's Cafeteria at the International Paper Company plant in Natchez.

On February 15, 1964, at 9 p.m., Winston left work and began walking down the road by the plant to go home. As was his usual practice, he attempted to hitchhike a ride home. A car stopped and a hooded white man carrying a rifle got out and ordered him into the car. Winston was ordered to lie down on the floor and a hood was placed over his head and tied around his neck. There were two other white men in the car, one of whom put a rifle against his head. During the ride, Winston was asked if he were a member of the NAACP, and the names of local members of the NAACP. When the car stopped, about 12-13 miles from Natchez, he was forced to crawl through the mud to a spot where other hooded men were waiting. His clothes were stripped off and he was whipped. He was forced to drink a bottle of castor oil and beaten a second time. Then he was forced to run naked down the road.

Winston wandered about until he found a house where the people took him in. They gave him clothes and drove him to Natchez. Later that day, a deputy sheriff, who had been notified of the incident, came to his home and was informed of what had occurred. No arrests have been made.

3. *Clifton Walker* was a Negro laborer who worked in the woodyard of the International Paper Company in Natchez. He had worked for the company since 1950 and was considered a good employee. He lived in Woodville in Wilkinson County, was married and had children. He drove to work in a car pool with another Negro and three whites.

On February 28, 1964, he worked his regular shift, from 3 p.m. to 11 pm. He never returned home. About noon the next day he was found dead in his car near the Poor House Road in Wilkinson County. He had been shot in the back with buckshot and rifle slugs. Sheriff Charles T. Netterville of Wilkinson County investigated. No arrests have been made.

4. *Richard Joe Butler* is a Negro farm laborer who lived in the Kingston Community. He had not been active in civil rights and his whereabouts at the present time are unknown.

Sometime in March, 1964, Butler's car was stopped by two cars driven by white men. He managed to escape. A few days later, the Identification Division of the Mississippi Highway Safety Patrol in Natchez was notified of a threat against Butler. Nightly surveillance of Butler's home was set

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THE STATISTICS OF INEQUALITY

Mississippi

COUNTY	VOTING AGE POP. 1960		% OF VOTING AGE POP. REGISTERED 1964		Median Family Income 1959		Median Education Level (Years)		1960-61 Year School District Expenditures Per	
	WHITE	NEGRO	WHITE	NEGRO	WHITE	NEGRO	WHITE	NEGRO	WHITE	NEGRO
ADAMS	10,900	9300	50.0%	6.8%	$6100	$2000	12	6	$220	$130
CARROLL	3000	2700	74.0	0.03	2500	900	9	6	185	100
HUMPHREYS	3300	5600	68.3	0.0	4100	1100	10	5	200	90
ISSAQUENA	640	1100	100.0	.46	3500	1000	8	4	215	120
MADISON	5600	10,400	100.0	2.0	4800	1100	12	6	220	115
PIKE	12,100	6900	64.6 ('62)	2.1 ('62)	4600	1800	11	7	165	115
TATE	4500	4300	70.0	0.0	3500	900	10	5	170	100
WASHINGTON	19,800	20,600	55.0 ('62)	8.6 ('62)	5600	1600	12	5	205	115

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up by the Patrol and the Adams County Sheriff's office. The surveillance generally ended about 2 a.m.

On April 5, 1964, about 8 am., Butler was shot four times with a shotgun on the property of his employer, near Kingston. He was seriously injured and taken to Jefferson Davis Hospital in Natchez. That same day he named five men as those who shot him. On April 7, 1964, the Highway Patrol arrested two men and charged them with assault with intent to kill. Charges against one were dropped when a lie detector test indicated his probable innocence; charges against the other man were dismissed on December 18. On October 27, 1964, two other men were arrested and charged with the shooting. Charges against both were dismissed without prejudice on November 17, 1964. County Prosecutor Edwin Benoist gave lack of evidence as the reason for the dismissal in all the cases.

5. On April 24, 1964, six crosses were burned in Adams County, as part of a statewide demonstration by the Ku Klux Klan. No arrests were made.

6. On the morning of June 7, 1964, the assistant pastor of the St. Mark's Baptist Church went to the church and found it vandalized. Sheriff Anders investigated No arrests have been ders investigated. No arrests have been

The Riverview Motel is a modern, brick motel operated by a Negro businessman in Natchez. It was opened for business for Negro guests only about March 1, 1964. Before the motel opened, vandals cut down a billboard advertising the motel, and shot out the motel sign. On June 20, 1964, between midnight and 1 a.m. a cross was burned on the property next to the motel. The proprietor did not call the sheriff. In addition, since the opening of the motel, the sign has been shot at on three occasions. Each time the police were notified. No arrests have been made.

8. On July 12, 1964, the Jerusalem Baptist Church burned to the ground. Rev. Shead Baldwin, the pastor of the church, learned of the fire early that morning. He reported the fire to the sheriff's office. The State Fire Marshal concluded that the fire was the result of arson. No arrests have been made.

9. On the same night the Bethel A.M.E. Church burned to the ground. The Sheriff and the State Fire Marshal investigated; the Marshal found evidence of arson. No arrests have been made.

10. Willie Washington is a Negro contractor who has been a successful bidder on municipal jobs in Natchez. He is a registered voter and is a member of the Business and Civic League. He is not active in the civil rights movement.

Again on July 12, while sitting in his living room, he heard the sound of breaking glass on the front steps of his porch. He went to the door and saw a car pulling away from the curb. He called the police who discovered that a glass bottle stuffed with a rag wick and filled with kerosene had been thrown at the house. The bottle was broken and the fluid did not ignite. The fragments were sent by the police to a police laboratory. No arrests have been made. Extremist literature circulated in the community after the incident suggested that all three incidents of July 12 were plants.

11. On August 5, 1964, the Mt. Pilgrim Baptist Church burned to the ground. The Sheriff investigated. The State Fire Marshal found evidence of arson. No arrests have been made.

12. Jake Frishman is a 58-year-old white man who operated a tavern for Negroes called The Wall Streete Grocery. The tavern was in a fram building next door to a house rented and used by civil rights workers last summer

On the night of August 14, 1964, with 60 persons inside, the tavern caught on fire. The building was evacuated and within a minute there was an explosion and flames shot through an open window. The fire spread rapidly and gutted the interior of the building. Investigating law enforcement officers discovered evidence of arson at the rear of the building.

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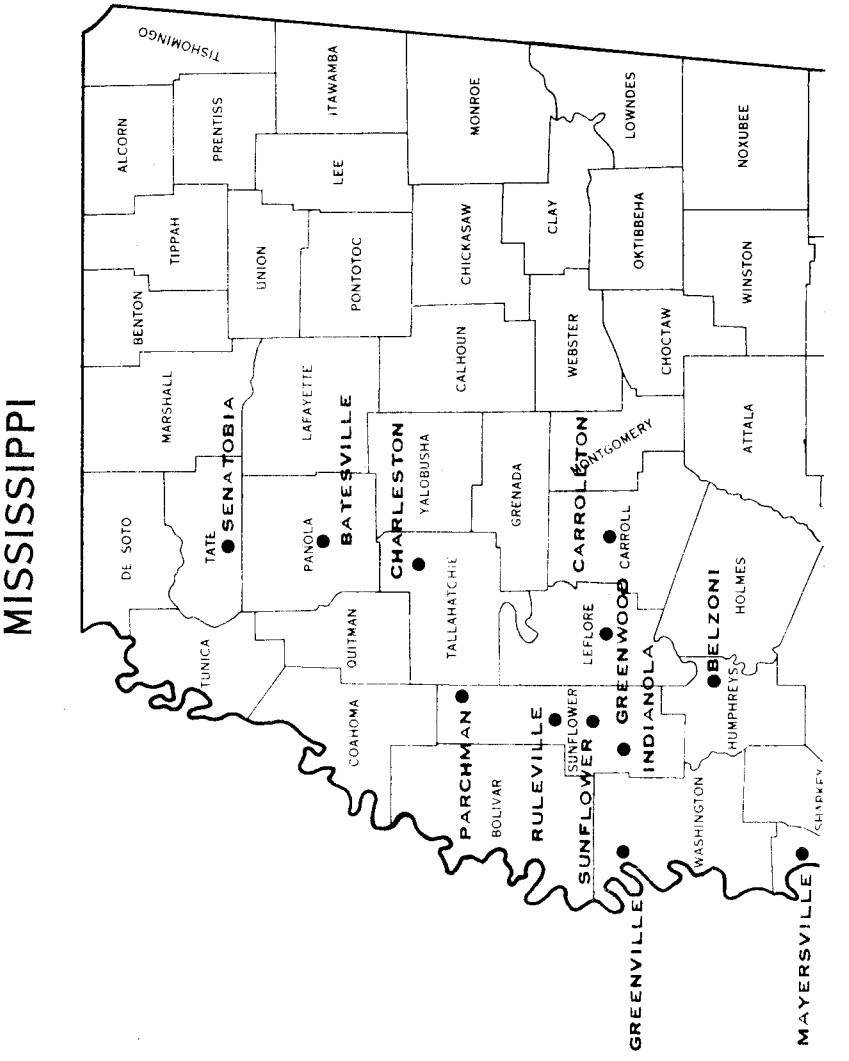

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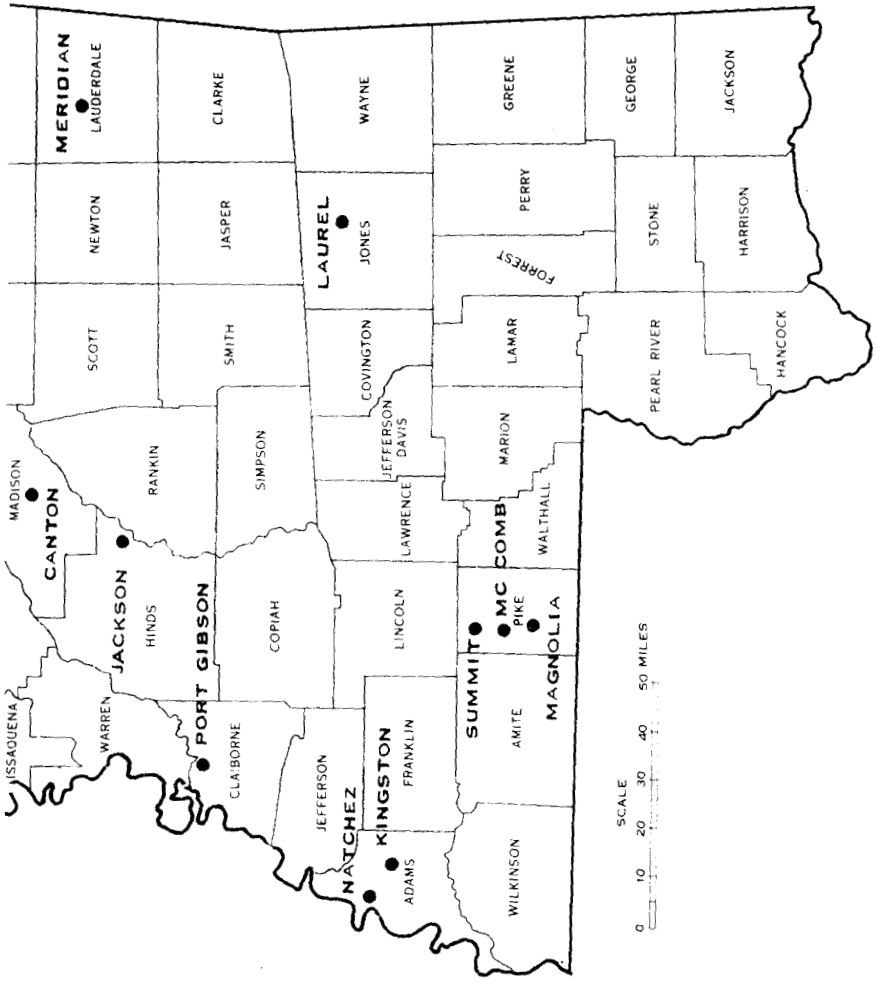

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The Sheriff believes the fire was set by whites. No arrest have been made.

13. On the night of September 15, 1964, stink bombs were thrown into two Jitney Jungle food stores owned by Mayor John J. Nosser. Bricks and a stink bomb were thrown into a Cadillac car agency owned by Orrick Metcalf and his son. The bombs were thrown ten days after pro-civil rights statements attributed to both men appeared in an interview published by the *Chicago Daily News*. No arrests have been made.

14. On September 26, 1964, at about 9:20 p.m., dynamite was thrown at the home of Mayor John J. Nosser. The Mayor and his wife were sitting in the living room at the time of the explosion. The blast cracked every wall in the house and knocked the front columns askew. Total damage was over $10,000. The police investigated. No arrests have been made.

15. On September 26, 1964, the home of Willie Washington was attacked again. About 9:30 p.m., while Mrs. Washington was alone, a bomb exploded in front of the house. The blast damaged the roof, gutters, and woodwork, cracked plaster, and broke two windows. Prior to the bombing, Mr. Washington had received a number of threatening phone calls. No arrests have been made.

16. George Metcalf is a 53-year-old Negro who works for the Armstrong Tire Company. He lives at 9 Catherine St., Natchez, Mississippi. He is president of the Adams County Chapter of the NAACP.

On the night of January 25, 1965, a shot was fired at his house, striking a window frame and shattering the window. Metcalf was in the house at the time. He called the FBI and the police who arrived that night and investigated. The police returned the next morning and continued the investigation. No arrests have been made.

Other incidents during the period covered by this report have affected white citizens of Natchez. None of the persons affected were willing to testify at the hearing because of fear of reprisal. In addition to these incidents, there were others reported which we were unable to confirm because of the victims' unwillingness to be interviewed.

Several white citizens of Natchez related to us that they had received threats following actions on their part indicating sympathy for the Negro community. Several persons received anonymous telephone calls — usually in the middle of the night. Another person was warned of an impending bombing of his house. Another person reported that he was under surveillance and that his car had been followed by a car occupied by a group of white men. One family's home was watched on New Year's Eve by an occupant of a car and then guests were followed by several cars when they left at 4:00 a.m.

There were also threats of economic boycott and actual boycotts against persons who hired Negroes or were otherwise identified as favorable to Negroes. Finally, the Catholic clergyman in the area were attacked by extremist literature as a result of visiting a Negro in jail.

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VIOLENCE IN MADISON COUNTY

1 On June 25, 1963, five young Negroes were hit with birdshot from a shotgun fired at them by a middle-aged white man as they were walking home on West Peace Street in Canton. A white man was arrested several days later on a warrant signed by city authorities. After four continuances of his trial he pleaded *nolo contendre* and was fined $500. Half of the fine was suspended upon good behavior.

2. On the evening of May 7, 1964, a man wearing a white hood fired shots at the Freedom House from a passing car. The license number and a description of the car were given to the Canton City Police. No arrests have been made.

3. On the night of May 20, 1964, a white man fired several shots at the Freedom House while Negro civil rights workers were inside. A description of the man and his car was given to the police. No arrests have been made.

4. A second Freedom Day was held in Madison County on May 29, 1964. Armed deputies and city policemen prevented any marching. Negroes remained massed at two Negro churches. Fifty-three persons were arrested during the day. A Negro youth was knocked unconscious and arrested by a policeman.

5. Shortly after midnight, on June 12, 1964, a bomb was thrown at the home of Mrs. Alberta Robinson on Second Firebaugh Avenue, Canton. The bomb landed on the corner of her lawn and did little damage A few minutes later a second bomb exploded on the lawn of the Pleasant Green Church of Christ on Walnut Street, causing minor damage. The church was used for civil rights meetings. The incidents were reported to the police. No arrests have been made.

The Economics of Inequality In Mississippi

1959 Median Family Income:
Whites: $4,209
Nonwhites: $1,444
% with Median Income less that $3,000.
Whites: 34%
Nonwhites:80%
Nonwhites male median income is 89% of white counterpart with no education, but only 52% with a college education.
Median Earnings for College Graduates:
Whites: $6,288
Nonwhites: $3,258
% of population with hot and cold water:
Whites: 71.9%
Nonwhites: 19.7%
% with flush toilets:
Whites: 73.9%
Nonwhites: 33.6%
% of population with sound housing units:
Whites: 76.8%
Nonwhites: 33.6%
% of population with deteriorating housing units:
Whites: 18%
Nonwhites: 38%
% of population with dilapidated housing units:
Whites: 5.2%
Nonwhites: 27.8%
(Bureau of Census figures)

6. On July 11, 1964, about 7 p.m., a 'molotov cocktail' was thrown at the Freedom House from a light green Volkswagen. The license number of the automobile was given to the city police and to a special city prosecutor who investigated the incident.

Three white youths were arrested. All three pleaded *nolo contendre* to a charge of breach of the peace and were

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fined $50 each. This fact was concealed from the Negro community by the prosecutor who stated to Federal investigators that he did not want members of the civil rights movement at the Freedom House to know of the arrest.

7. On Sunday, July 19, 1964, Michel Piore and William Carney, two white civil rights volunteers were assaulted by a local white man as they walked by his gas station on West Peace Street. They swore out a warrant for the arrest of their assailant. Two continuances were granted in this case. In late August both Piore and Carney returned home. The City Attorney then dropped the prosecution because the complaining witnesses had left Canton.

8. On the night of July 19, 1964, the Christian Union Baptist Church in Ridgeland burned to the ground. The incident was reported to the sheriff. No arrests have been made.

9. On August 2, 1964, shots were fired at the Freedom House from a car containing white teenagers. George Washington, Jr., fired back. The white youths fired again and drove away. Information describing the car was given to the police by Washington. *A few days later he was arrested for unlawful possession of a firearm.* No other arrests have been made.

10. On August 11, 1964, around 11 p.m. the meeting hall of the Willing Workers Society of the Mount Pleasant Church of Guckstadt burned to the ground. Sheriff Cauthen investigated the incident. On August 28, 1964, he arrested Joe Lee Watts, a Negro civil rights worker on suspicion of arson. Watts posted $500 bond. When the case was presented to the grand jury he was not indicted. No other arrests have been made.

11. On the night of September 5, 1964, dynamite exploded inside Joe & Barb's Curb Market on West Peace Street in Canton. The business is owned by Joe Ferguson, who is white. It had been on the boycott list of the Madison County Movement until April 1964. He was the only white store owner taken off the boycott list. The incident was reported to the police. No arrests have been made.

12. Shortly after the explosion at Joe & Barb's, George Washington, Sr., inspected his store. He found a 5-foot fuse leading from the foundation of the store. The police investigated and found eight sticks of dynamite. No arrests have been made.

13. On the night of September 17, 1964, two Negro churches that had been used for civil rights meetings burned to the ground. The incidents were reported to the sheriff. No arrests have been made.

GREENWOOD JUSTICE

The following is based on an analysis of City Court records in Greenwood, Mississippi, which was conducted by the staff of the Commission. The purpose of this was to determine whether civil rights workers appearing before the court received heavier fines and sentences for the same offenses than other persons not involved in civil rights.

The City Court docket of Greenwood during 1963 shows that five civil rights workers were charged with blocking the sidewalk, running a stop sign, operating a car with improper equipment, and reckless driving. All were found guilty. Except for the worker charged with reckless driving, all received fines which grossly exceeded fines given to other persons during the year. Court records also show that during 1963 approximately thirty-five persons were arrested during demonstrations in connection with attempts to register to vote. They were charged with breach of the peace, disorderly conduct, and disturbance in a public place. The majority received fines of $200 and jail sentences. The fines were fifteen to twenty times greater than the average

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fine imposed for similar violations of city ordinances during the preceding year.

In 1964 the Department of Justice filed an action under the Civil Rights Act of 1960 against Greenwood officials and others alleging that persons engaged in voter registration activity were given substantially heavier sentences than other persons for comparable offenses. The Commission staff analyzed the City Court docket during 1964 after the institution of the Attorney General's action. The analysis shows that during the last six months of 1964 civil rights "offenders" still received discriminatory sentences and fines, although to a lesser degree.

During the last half of 1964 four civil rights workers were charged with profanity and driving without a proper license. All were found guilty. They were required to post a cash bond or were fined amounts greatly in excess of fines given to other persons during this period ourt records also show that approximately 130 persons were arrested during demonstrations at the courthouse in connection with attempts to register. They were charged with a variety of violations of city ordinances. All were found guilty. The majority were fined $100 and sentenced to 30 days on the county farm. These sentences were substantially more severe than sentences imposed on all other persons for violations of city ordinances during the same period.

CAMPING

Plan to spend a part of your summer camping on Casco Bay, Me. Attractively maintained sites with excellent view. Low rates. Write CAMPING, c/o Idler.

The Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC) has recently been formed on college campuses to work for a new South in the areas of civil rights, academic freedom, capital punishment, poverty and other relevant social and political issues. Write for additional information and newsletter. 915 18th Ave. S., Nashville, Tenn.

REPORT OF THE STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Excerpts from the statement of Dr. A. B. Britton, Jr., of Jackson, reporting the findings of the Mississippi State Advisory Committee to the Commission on Civil Rights. Dr. Britton is Chairman of the committee:

The transcripts of Committee sessions contain detailed testimony indicating that duly constituted law enforcement officials, as well as private citizens, have actively thwarted efforts of individuals and groups to register to vote in a number of our counties.

Witnesses from several Southwest Mississippi counties, mainly Adams, Amite, Pike, Copiah, and Wilkinson, reported that crosses had been burned in their yards These persons expressed their belief that there was no basis for these acts other than voter registration activities.

In the same locality one witness reported that his home was shot into; another witness reported that he was kidnapped and beaten; one that he was stopped on a lonely road and whipped by hooded men; and another that his store was bombed. In these counties alone a total of 16 cross burnings, five murders, and one mysterious disappearance was reported to the Committee.

Several responsible persons declared that in one city in the southwestern part of the state a reign of terror prevailed. They expressed the belief that the local police and other law enforcement officials had no desire to apprehend and seek conviction of the hoodlums involved in these incidents.

In the Mississippi Delta area, harassment of voter registration workers has taken many forms. There have been a number of reports to the Committee that under

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color of law, voter registration workers have been stopped on the roads and highways and subjected to cursings, insults, and physical beatings. It was reported that on one occasion in Yazoo County a carload of voter registration workers was stopped by a highway patrolman, verbally assaulted, and arrested. A citizen of LeFlore County reported that he was assaulted by a local town marshal. A witness living near Tchua, Mississippi, testified that after attempting to register to vote in Holmes County, his house was firebombed. The deputy sheriff arrested and charged the witness with doing it himself. Only quick action by the U.S. Department of Justice saved the witness from a prison term A Greenwood, Mississippi, witness reported that he had been struck by two bullets fired from a passing car. No arrests were ever made for any of these crimes.

In the Central Mississippi area the story was very much the same. At Canton, witnesses reported that the police continually harassed persons attending voter registration rallies held in Negro churches. Two witnesses testified that they and others in their company were stopped on the highway just outside Canton, arrested, and pistol whipped by the deputy sheriff as other law enforcement officers stood by and watched. Others in Canton told of suffering job losses, arrests, boycott, and other forms of intimidation because they attempted to register or to encourage others to do so. Many of these people testified that they were arrested on flimsy charges and held undr maximum bail. We have no information to indicate that white citizens not involved in voter registration efforts received similar treatment.

Several witnesses reported that in some sections of Mississippi there appeared to be a pattern of collusion between local law enforcement officers and hoodlum elements. A witness from one southwest Mississippi town testified that the mayor, the chief of police, and the local leader of the Ku Klux Klan were friends and constant companions.

Many Negroes reported that they have come to feel that to complain to law officers is to invite the presence of night riders only a few short hours later. A witness from a rural area in Central Mississippi told of calling the sheriff to report that young hoodlums had driven up and down the road and shot into seven different homes. When the constable arrived the next morning after being summoned, he brought with him the young men identified by the witness as the participants in the previous night's incident. That night, the witness said, the same young men returned to shoot up the neighborhood again.

In Jackson, another witness testified that she was assaulted in the bus station. She stated that when the police arrived they arrested her instead of her assailant.

Two other witnesses told of being stopped in their vehicle by members of the Jackson police force. The officers explained that they merey wanted to provide protection for the civil rights workers. Shortly afterward the civil right workers were stopped a few miles further up the road and beaten. The witnesses felt that it was the police who advised the assailants of their presence. These and other witnesses testified concerning several occasions when the police offered protection to the civil rights workers, but were absent when lawless elements arrived to harass and intimidate.

Witnesses reported that a number of private homes, churches, and other buildings used for voter registration meetings were bombed or burned in the night. Several burnings and bombings were reported in the Southwest Mississippi area.

A house and a church were reported bombed in Canton. In the only case to our knowledge where those responsible were convicted, the judge released the convicted men

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with light fines and suspended sentences. Meanwhile, other judges in Mississippi have levied maximum fines against civil rights workers for far less serious offenses.

Many other witnesses appearing before the Advisory Committee testified that those seeking to register to vote have been fired from their jobs, have had their loans called in, and their credit cut off, have been forced to leave their homes, and, in many cases, have been subjected to acts of physical violence. Evidence of such activity was particularly strong from communities in Sunflower and Madison Counties.

While there is considerable evidence that in many quarters Negro Mississippians have suffered unjust and often brutal treatment, there is also other evidence which leads us to conclude that in some Mississippi communities sincere and honest efforts are being made to guarantee the rights of citizenship.

We are pleased to note that in Washington and Harrison Counties, for example, there has been comparatively little official resistance to the efforts of Negroes to become registered voters Witnesses appearing before the Advisory Committee testified that discrimination at the polls in these localities was kept to a minimum. While we seriously question some aspects of the Mississippi voter registration laws, we are heartened to find that in these counties the State laws are apparently being administered as fairly as these laws permit.

Another encouraging sign has been the fact that in a number of Mississippi cities paces of public accommodation which were formerly segregated now provide service to all citizens. We feel that this change has occurred as a direct result of the passage of the Civil Rights Law of 1964. In each of the cities we visited, there are now a few places where Negroes can be fed and lodged.

In the first six months of 1963, the Committee heard a significantly large number of complaints about incidents growing out of attempts by Negroes to be served in bus stations.

Since then, the number of such complaints has lessened. There are several reasons for this change. A number of bus stations have simply decided to comply with the law.

Others have repaced their lunch counters with vending machines, thus avoiding the possibility of providing personal nondiscriminatory service to all customers. Still other bus stations have closed their doors altogether.

There are still some reported to be unchanged in the practice of unlawful segregation.

As the Advisory Committee met in various towns its members made arrangements several times to have lunch together in a public restaurant when these meetings extended through the noon hour. On every such occasion, a representative of the Advisory Committee would make arrangements with the restaurant management in advance. We were always cordially welcomed and graciously treated. However, we still feel that we cannot do this without first making advance preparation The climate in Mississippi is not yet such that we can be certain that a biracial group will be served upon entering an establishment unannounced.

Another sign that some degree of progress is being made is the spirit of cooperation with which the Advisory Committee has been received in some communities. In the past it has been an extremely rare thing to be able even to communicate with the legally constituted leaders in government. In our meetings, sheriffs and other officials were always invited to appear, especially when the Committee had advance information that these officials were to be involved in a complaint. Until quite recently, little response to these invitations was ever noted. However, there are now hopeful signs of a change of attitude on the part of some officials.

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In reviewing signs of progress in the state, the Committee wishes to take note of several activities on the part of private groups. The Mississippi Council of Human Relations, which was first organized in 1956 and was forced to become inactive, was reorganized in May 1962. It is composed of several hundred representative citizens. At the present time it has a full-time staff director and has organized a local chapter in Jackson and the Gulf Coast. On a continuing basis it sponsors programs and projects designed to strengthen the relationship between the various racial groups in the state. From all indications the organization will continue to gain support.

In 1964, several hundred community leaders in McComb issued a statement repudiating lawlessness in that community and called for a restoration of law and order.

Soon after the enactment of the Civil Rights Act, the Jackson Chamber of Commerce publicly urged compliance with the public accommodations section of the Act.

Within recent weeks, the Mississippi Economic Council, which is equivalent to a State Chamber of Commerce, issued a resolution calling for the following:

1. A respect for law and order must be maintained, and penalty must be equitably applied to all violators;
2. Communication between the races must be maintained;
3. Registration and voting laws should be impartially administered for all;
4. Public education must be maintained and strengthened.

This statement was endorsed by the Chambers of Commerce of Jackson, Vicksburg, Gulfport, Winona, Montgomery County, and by the Mississippi Manufacturers Association, and was entered into the Congressional Record by Senator John C. Stennis.

Based upon information collected by the Committee through open meetings and other factfinding activities, the Committee concludes that its findings of 1963, with minor exceptions, are valid today. For purposes of emphasis the Committee restates these findings:

1. The first finding of this Committee is that justice under law is not guaranteed for the Negro in Mississippi in the way that it is for the white man. This is true to the extent that much of the basic meaning of being an American citizen is denied to nearly half the citizens of the State. The idea of the dignity and worth of every individual is fundamental to the American way of life and to the Judeo-Christian code of ethics on which our system is based. These concepts are systematically violated and an injustice done to us all when 42.3 percent of the citizens of this State must either accept an inferior station in life and an attitude of servility, or endanger themselves and their families by protesting. All Mississippians are thereby denied the privileges of living under the best and fairest form of government yet devised. We find that terror hangs over the Negro in Mississippi and is an expectancy for those who refuse to accept their color as a badge of inferiority; and terrorism has no proper place in the American form of government.

2. The second finding of this Committee is that the State Government of Mississippi is not sufficiently concerned with the task of protecting the rights of all the citizens of Mississippi. Even if police brutality were less severe and widespread than we have believed, a responsible State Government would take energetic steps to ascertain the facts and punish the wrongdoers.

A firm position on this matter by the State Government would reduce the tendency of lesser officials to abuse their authority and would enhance the respect of the people for the State Government. As matters stand today, we are forced to report that the attitude of the State Government toward the realization of the rights of all our citizens has

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been one of obstruction rather than protection. Sections 2155.4-2155.6 of the Mississippi Code are an indication of the prevailing official attitude. These sections make a conviction for perjury in a civil rights case easier to obtain than in any other perjury case. Since Negroes represent the overwhelming majority of persons likely to be forced to make sworn statements in order to secure basic rights, this 1960 legislation seems designed to intimidate or punish those of the Negro race who would assert these rights.

3. While this Committee feels that the accounts of its meetings in the press of the state have usually been fair and objective, we find that in general the press is failing to meet its obligation to our society. When an element of government exceeds or neglects its proper role in a free society, it is the duty of the press to alert the people to the situation. The people of Mississippi are largely unaware of the extent of the problem of illegal official violence and the press is partly to blame. It is a zealous crusader against governmental injustice when the Federal Government is believed to be at fault, but closes its eyes to state or local official mistreatment of Negro citizens.

4. This Committee finds many citizens of Mississippi continue not to have equal protection of law due them as American citizens.

We note with approval and commendation the increased activity of the U.S. Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation in attempting to secure equal protection for all citizens — especially in the accelerated prosecution of voter denial suits and the enlargement of the FBI office in Jackson.

However, at this time, we deem it of utmost importance that some procedure be devised whereby the physical safety and security of all persons seeking to obtain or exercise their constitutional rights may be guaranteed. This is a function which normally and rightfully belongs to local and state authorities. But the quality of law enforcement varies so widely throughout the state as to make the usual avenues for securing protection inadequate.

In the light of the public statements of cooperation made by Governor Paul Johnson on February 9, 1965, we respectfully suggest that Governor Johnson, as Chief Law Enforcement Officer of the State, use the great prestige of his office to initiate a voluntary, statewide program of cooperation between local and state law enforcement officers with Federal authorities to the end that all Mississippi citizens may be secure in their homes and persons.

5 We are encouraged by the fact that a small number of public officials have expressed a desire to take leadership away from the forces of intolerance and place it in the hands of those who have an honest desire to live in an atmosphere of decency and human dignity. In a few instances we have seen individuals and organization leader pubicly state and defend a position to make equality a reality in our state.

These persons should be encouraged. Individuals who are willing and able to give affirmative leadership in the state, rather than the leaders of reaction, should be sought for advice and consulted on political matters by the Federal Government.

The Committee wishes to stress that Mississippi's most pressing problem continues to be that of persuading white Mississippians of good will to speak out publicly for law enforcement, equal protection under the law, and implementation in our public and personal lives of ideals and principles consistent with our Judeo-Christian heritage in a democratic society.

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Your Friends
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to THE IDLER

THE CALIFORNIAN

Mr. Harrison, the General Secretary of the M.M.S.A. (Mercantile Maritime Service Ass.) very kindly gave me a copy of your October, 1964, issue, which contained an article by Ishmael on my father the late Captain Stanley Lord and the part he played in the *Titanic* affair.

Today is the third anniversary of his death and I think it is a most appropriate day for me to write and let you know how much I appreciate, and I know he would do also, your lucid account of the *Californian's* activities during the fateful night.

He always maintained that whatever the lights were that were seen from the *Titanic* to approach and turn away from her, during the last hours, they were most certainly not those of the *Californian*, which was stationary over 20 miles away, throughout the night.

Stanley Tutton Lord
Wallasey, England.

Headline and Lead Of the Month

(With a special award for soaring journalistic patriotism)

REVERED AMERICAN SHRINES RESCUED FROM SAVAGE PLOT OF ASSASSINS OF DEMOCRACY

PRO-RED TERRORISTS
DISDAIN HUMAN LIFE

By Edward V. M'Carthy

NEW YORK, Feb. 16 — (UPI) — Police and FBI agents Tuesday smashed a fantastic plot by three pro-Castro, pro-Red China Negro terrorists and an attractive blond Canadian girl to dynamite three shrines of American freedom — the Statue of Liberty, the Liberty Bell and the Washington Monument.

Police Commissioner Michael J. Murphy said the Negroes — members of the military Black Liberation Front — did not care how many innocent men, women and children tourists would be killed in the planned simultaneous destruction of the three symbols of American liberty . . .

—Lead story in the Memphis Commercial-Appeal

HORSEPOWER & SUB-TEEN BRAS

Boy! That was a blast at advertising (January issue). You weren't kidding.

Maybe, basically, in this world of stress, strain and bomb, we're so busy worrying about survival we haven't really had a chance to explore some other fundamental moral issues . . . issues like auto horsepower and speed; cigarette smoking; tinny appliances; bras for sub-teens; underfilling cartons; etc. I mention only a few, those you usually hear in conversations about advertising. Well, they certainly *are* moral issues. So, here goes the old chin out.

Do we unanimously agree that auto horsepower and speed should be limited? Or would we rather enjoy the

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ease and quiet with which a 375-horsepower Lincoln climbs a hill; passes; yes, even speeds at times and accept the responsibility of adult handling of it? There are still plenty of nice American-made, 95-horsepower sixes for those who want them. I don't think it's fair to blame advertising for h.p., speed or highway deaths. Let's enjoy the positive and take more steps to weed out abuses of the driving privilege. If we get to the point where there are too many cars, that will be tough on all of us — just plain tough. And it very well may happen. But, I suspect American ingenuity will come up with something and that things will get safer.

Cigarette smoking! Okay — Here it comes from a non-smoker. I can put up with the smoke if the smokers can put up with the possibility of lung cancer. Again, I think it's an individual problem. If you want to go that far, and I think it might be a good idea, you might lock up cigarettes and permit only those over 21 to buy them. If adult cigarette smokers want to keep on going I don't think we can stop them by legislating against their sin. It would obviously turn into another "prohibition" with bootleg galore. Maybe cigarette advertising does weave a mysterious or obvious power over the teens of today, driving them to smoke. But, there's plenty that makes me doubt it. Maybe the example of parents and the lack of much action from schools is involved, too. But, before we butcher the ad man, ripping the last shred from his grey flannel suit, let's take one of those old American majority votes. Who knows, it might even be right! Or, let's think about a public education advertising campaign to compete against teen smoking; a campaign like Smokey the Bear; Susan Spotless; The Savings Bond Minute Man; F.D.R.'s March of Dimes; the U.S.O.; Support The United Nations; the President's Council on Physical Fitness; Mental Health; traffic safety (The Life You Save May Be Your Own); and others. If kids are drawing the inference of adult status from cigarette ads and smoking, you have my vote at least to turn it off. But, let's find out for sure first — maybe lock up the cigarettes till they're 21. Let's not tear down advertising as an institution. It has a way of generally giving the people what they want.

How about tinny appliances and other products that didn't turn out to be what we expect? First, how much did you pay for it? Take a pair of men's shoes. Did you pay $42.50 for a pair of Bally shoes from Switzerland or Nunn-Bush from America? $26.50 for a pair of Bostonians? $16.50 for a pair of Roblees? $7.77 for a pair of Tom McAn's? $395 for *two* pairs from Hill Brothers? $1.99 on Famous Barr's basement bargain table? 39c for some kids' tennis shoes from Japan? Come, come now. I think you'll admit you got what you paid for. Even if each and every one was advertised, "Rugged, handsome, long-lasting, comfortable." I can't imagine you were hoodwinked. Besides, we all need a little push and persuasion to buy a lot of things we need — yes, even some we could do without in the middle of Walden Pond. I say relax. Most of it's good for you. You should have the responsibility not to overspend, but, if you don't, let's not make the whole class sit in the corner.

How about other factors influencing product quality? I guess if I demanded a '65 Buick built like the '46 was, I'd have to pay a lot more U.A.W. overtime and United States Steel Co. prices. And I sure would like to have one like that. My '55 Chrysler wouldn't have made it past the first inspector on Chrysler's 1935 assembly line.

Does this so-called planned obsolescence serve some good? Are there a third more jobs because cars wear out faster? As a matter of fact, despite everything, I think they last longer, run better, are more fun to drive. But, appliances (the small ones) seem bad.

I think an appliance does not have to be built to last 100 years. I think 10, 15 or 20, depending on function and use, is more than reasonable — 3 months ridiculous. Let's start building

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'em better. I would like to get 5 years out of a toaster advertised for $13.99. If I have one made up for a hundred bucks, then, by golly, I want the greatest thing since sliced bread.

Bras for sub-teens! Sears had an ad with a headline something like "Your Little Girl's First Bra." The girl pictured had as yet just barely begun to develop breasts. To me, that's up to mom how she respects the integrity and joys of childhood and an unhurried adolescence. I wish more mothers did, but, I wouldn't discourage ads for the junior bras if they want to go ahead and push their children. That's a personal matter and none of my damn business and certainly not the business of government — laws or advisors. Let's not take still another swing at the battered ad man for engineering the little girl's downfall. Let's look instead to see if there may not be a couple of neurotic parents behind her who are so insecure because U.S. Marine diplomacy is a thing of the past and the big bomb a thing of the present that they've constructed a whole artificial world of head-in-the-sand values and decorated them with a lot of material things they don't need. Material things are great in the right prospective!

Underfilling cartons. (I just noticed the connection with this and the above!) Well, if the carton or tube has less in it than it says it does, let's call the cops and get it straightened out. If this is the general impression of housewives these days, the big boys better watch out. No ads in the world will save them from that wrath.

Now, I have exhausted myself and must haul off to bed. We're going down to 5 degrees below tonight, but I'll be warm in my super-comfortable, sensational new climate-for-living thermal underwear by Hugtite with fully-vented tail gate and power zipper. Mrs. Peterson thought they were a gyp, but I think they're great — itch a little, maybe, but, *eh!*

Brimless Slimline
St. Louis, Mo.

EDITOR'S NOTES

Thanks to: TS, LS, Jackson, Miss.; RA, Medford, Mass.; BK, New London, Conn.; TW, Austin, Tex.; RH, Antarctica; ER, Cranston, RI; WM, Rome, Italy; DC, New Haven, Conn.

Flotsam and Jetsam: Tom Whitbread's book of poems, "Four Infinitives," has been published by Harper & Rowe . . . Tristam Coffin's book, "Passion of the Hawks," is now available as a paperback called "The Armed Society." Give it to your militaristic friends and watch their blood pressure rise . . . The Idler is now available at the Brown Study Book Shop on Washington's Capitol Hill (307 7th St. SE). Also at Ann Cooper's news stand in the Carroll Arms Hotel . . . We have received a copy of "The Congress and America's Future" (Prentice-Hall) and recommend it to those who think they have a simple solution to congressional reform problems . . . Write to the Conference on Economic Progress, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington 6, D.C. and ask for the pamphlet "Progress or Poverty." It's one dollar and indicates the war on poverty has hardly hit the beach . . . Next month, Donald Velsey tells why he thinks Washington is turning into another Miami Beach.
Velsey tells why he thinks Washington is turning into another Miami Beach.

ADVERTISEMENTS

1. Commission-based Ads. Our policy is explained elsewhere in this issue.

2. Free Ads for Subscribers. May not be selling a service or product. Should be brief. The Idler reserves the right to edit all ads. The Idler assumes no responsibilities for transactions. Printed on space-available basis.

3. Paid Classified Advertising: Ten cents a word.

4. Other Paid Advertising: See elsewhere in this issue for rates.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE:
1st OF PRECEDING MONTH

It is estimated that the new push-button dial system being developed by the telephone company will soon permit millions to get a busy signal in one-half the time previously required.

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BACK-ISSUE INDEX

Each month, THE IDLER prints an index of articles from past issues that have continuing interest. While they last, these back issues may be ordered from THE IDLER, 125 5th St. NE, Washington 2, D. C. at 50c a copy. A full index for 1964 will be found in the January 1965 issue. Please enclose the proper amount. We can not bill. OOP: Out of print.

ABOLITION OF PROPERTY — What does property mean? Is there any left? Lewis Smith presents an interesting thesis. (Feb. '65)

CONGRESS — Review of legislation not acted upon by the 88th Congress (Jan. '65) OOP

DESALINATION — Background report on government's program (Feb. '65)

DRAFT—Sen. Gaylord Nelson argues for an end to the draft. (Jan. '65) OOP —Why servicemen don't reenlist. (Feb. '65)

FEDERAL RESERVE BOARD — Rep. Wright Patman examines some of the deficiencies in the Federal Reserve system (Dec. '64) OOP

FICTION—Capital Romance, By A. H. Berzen. (March '65.)

FOREIGN POLICY — Speech by Sen. Fulbright on the need to build bridges of accommodation to the Communist world. (March '65.)

POETRY—Emigrants' Letter, By Antoni Gronowicz. (March '65.)

POSTAL SERVICE — A report on the deteriorating state of the mails. (March '65.)

RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING — Edward P. Morgan comments. (March '65.)

VOTING REGISTRATION — Why millions are disenfranchised by restrictive registration laws (Oct. '64)

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